

Message Text

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TAGS: OVIP (HOLBROOKE, RICHARD) TATT PARM CH UK US
SUBJECT: US/UK EAST ASIA BILATERALS--SALE OF WESTERN
ARMS AND TECHNOLOGY TO CHINA

1. DURING THE OCTOBER 26 US-UK BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS ON
EAST ASIA BETWEEN ASSISTANT SECRETARY HOLBROOKE AND FCO
DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY CORTAZZI, BOTH SIDES MENTIONED
THAT THE FRENCH HAD BEEN EXTREMELY RETICENT TO PROVIDE
DETAILS OF THE RECENT VISIT OF GENERAL YANG CHEN-WU TO
PARIS BEARING OUT OTHER INDICATIONS THAT THE FRENCH WERE
SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING AT THE CABINET LEVEL THE SALE OF
MILITARY TECHNOLOGY AND HARDWARE TO CHINA.

2. IN RESPONSE TO BRITISH QUERY ON US ATTITUDE TOWARD
SUCH TRANSFERS, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY GLEYSTEN
SAID THAT OUR POLICY WOULD REFLECT FOUR CONSIDERATIONS:

- A. OUR DIRECT SECURITY INTERESTS;
- B. OUR WISH TO AVOID MOVES WHICH WOULD SEVERELY
PROVOKE THE USSR;
- C. THE POSSIBLE IMPACT ON COUNTRIES NEIGHBORING
CHINA; AND,
- D. OUR NEED TO COORDINATE WITH OUR ALLIES. THUS WE

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WOULD FIRMLY OPPOSE ANY SALES WHICH WOULD INCREASE
PRC STRATEGIC CAPABILITIES, AND WE WERE NOT OURSELVES
CONSIDERING ANY US ARMS SALES TO CHINA. OUR ATTENTION
WAS FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON WHETHER WE COULD LIBERALIZE
SALES OF MILITARY-RELATED TECHNOLOGY, AND WE WERE FINDING
IT DIFFICULT TO FORMULATE A NEAT POLICY ON SUCH A
QUESTION.

3. MURRAY, ASSISTANT UNDER SECRETARY, ASKED IF THESE ASPECTS OF US POLICY WOULD BE BROUGHT TO COCOM COGNIZANCE GLEYSTEN SAID THEY PROBABLY WOULD AS OUR POLICY EVOLVED. IN DOING SO WE WOULD HAVE TO BE VERY CAREFUL TO AVOID GIVING AN IMPRESSION OF A "GREEN LIGHT" FOR ARMS TRANSFER TO THE PRC, BECAUSE SIGNIFICANT QUANTITIES OF WEAPONS TRANSFERS COULD CREATE SERIOUS ANXIETIES IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES AND COULD ALSO COMPLICATE OUR RELATIONS WITH TAIWAN. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE WOULD HAVE TO BE REALISTIC AND RECOGNIZE THAT WE MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO STOP THE FRENCH AND OTHERS FROM AT LEAST MODEST AMOUNTS OF ARMS TRANSFERS.

4. MURRAY SAID THAT THE CHINESE HAVE SHOWN A GENERAL INTEREST ON ARMS APPARENTLY IN HOPES OF STIMULATING THE BRITISH AND OTHER INITIATIVES; THE UK, WHILE BEING POLITE TO THE CHINESE, HAS RETREATED BEHIND A SMOKE SCREEN MURRAY NOTED, HOWEVER, THE POSSIBILITY OF UK MANUFACTURERS AND PARLIAMENTARIANS REACTING STRONGLY SHOULD THERE BE INDICATIONS THAT OTHER COUNTRIES MIGHT BE STEALING A MARCH ON BRITISH INDUSTRY. HOLBROOKE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT WE COULD BE ON THE VERGE OF CHAOS WERE THERE TO BE A SCRAMBLE TO SELL ARMS AND TECHNOLOGY TO THE CHINESE.

5. BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT THE ISSUE WAS ONE OF THE
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HIGHEST SENSITIVITY WHICH WOULD REQUIRE CONTINUING CONSULTATION BETWEEN THE FCO AND THE DEPARTMENT. AT THE CLOSE OF THIS PORTION OF THE CONVERSATION, CORTAZZI EMPHASIZED THAT THE UK WOULD MAKE NO MOVES IN THIS AREA WITHOUT THE FULLEST COORDINATION WITH THE USG.

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